# The Congregationalist

## A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

*by*

DR. ALFRED GRANT WALTON, Brooklyn, N. Y.

O God! I thank Thee for the gift of another year,
May I meet the hours that are ahead
With brave heart and unfailing hope
As one who puts his trust in Thee
And, trusting, is unafraid.
May every thought be pure and every purpose holy.
Make me generous in spirit, tolerant in judgment,
Unselfish in all human relations.
May nothing that I do or say harm another;
Whatever comes, may I meet life courageously
Bearing with patience the hope deferred
And the dream unrealized.
With simple faith and unerring constancy
May I seek Thy holy will,
Ever growing in a knowledge of Thy truth
And walking with joy in the ways of peace. AMEN.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

JANUARY 1961

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
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| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

*"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." — Galations 5:1*

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 1

# THE MISSIONARY COLUMN

We have two great motives in giving to "benevolences": (1) helping the unfortunate, underprivileged and needy after the example of our Lord, who "went about doing good"; (2) helping spread the good news of the Gospel of Christ everywhere and in every way at home and abroad through the preaching of the message, starting new Churches, aiding weak Churches, religious education and the distribution of the Scriptures.

Missions are the expression of conviction of the truth of one's religion. If it is true, it should be made universal. A non-missionary religion means either feeble persuasion or a private religion for a particular national, ethnic, cultural or exclusive group. Congregationalists believe strongly in furthering Christianity toward the ideal of an ecumenical fellowship of free Churches, — negatively, without overhead control or pressure, and, positively, with the utmost of warm fraternity and hearty cooperation. They are zealous for the extension of this ideal.

## Some Field Notes

The new Church in **Anchorage, Alaska,** organized August 17, 1960, is exhibiting considerable enterprise. The group meets Sunday afternoons in Willow Hall, a downtown public building, concluding with a pot-luck supper (once at least with mooseburgers). They have engaged the Hall for all the Sundays of 1961 but April 30. They have filed on a choice five acre lot and are incorporated, with a corporate seal. Members take turns in devotional leadership.

They are missionary minded, voting a contribution to missions and sending boxes to needy home missionary families. They have started a savings account for a building fund and studied tentative plans for a church. The Cheyenne, Wyoming Church is giving them hymnals. They have secured Sunday School materials. They were represented at the Alaska Council of Churches meeting in Anchorage November 10-12. They now much need a minister.

**In South India** many of the Churches founded by the London Missionary Society (Congregational) want to remain free and not be included in the Church of South India. They instituted a lawsuit for their rights long before the Cadman case in America. Word came November 28th that the High Court at Madras has decreed they can "conduct services in the L. M. churches as of their right." And they have been granted "cemetery use likewise." Moreover, some 72 of these Churches, large and small, have formed an Association or Federation and resolved as an Association and as individuals "to throw off the name C. S. I. and cut all connections with the C. S. I., not only not to accept the bishop or his deputy, but to give up the church worker, if he does not give up his C. S. I. relationship and gives in writing to be faithful and loyal to the Free London Mission Church free Church principles." This is a courageous, sacrificial stand for the free Church principle. These people merit our moral support and financial help. Further India items must wait.

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The National Association has available through its office at 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin, a considerable variety of pamphlets and booklets to help Churches and members in studying the proposed Constitution of the United Church of Christ and the question of uniting with it. These may be obtained by writing to the Milwaukee office or the Eastern Field Office at 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts.

The following are available free: "The Unending Fight for the Freedom of Our Churches," G. V. Bohman; "The Biblical Basis of Congregationalism," and "The Freedom of the Preacher," H. R. Butman; "The Constitutional Question" and "Some Concerns About a Constitution for Congregationalism," H. D. Gray; "Why This United Church and Who Wants It?" H. W. Johnson; "Comments on the Opinion of the General Council Attorneys," T. G. Long; "Property Rights in Congregational Christian Churches," N. S. McKendrick; and "A Message to all Congregational Christian Churches," "Before Your Church Votes," and "If You Vote Yes," issued by the National Association.

Of particular interest are "A Comprehensive Analysis of the Constitution," parts I, II and III, a smaller digest of the Analysis, the "Newsletter" of October 25, 1960, regarding legal matters, "How Reliable Are Official Assurances?" "Assurances Omitted," and "Practical Aspects of the Merger."

The following are available at the prices stated: "When the Church is More Than the Church," Howard Conn, 10¢ each or $6.00 per hundred; "What It Means to Be a Member of a Congregational Christian Church," H. D. Gray, 2¢ each, $1.50 per hundred.

Of great interest for a complete study of what Congregationalism is, we recommend "The Congregational Way of Life," A. A. Rouner, Jr., published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., and available from the National Association's Milwaukee office @ $3.50, with 40% discount for Churches or Church organizations if five or more are ordered, 33⅓% discount for smaller quantities. For a thoughtful readable study of the whole question of Church Unity, we suggest "The Quest For Church Unity," by Matthew Spinka, The Macmillan Co., $2.50.

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**Change of address notices, undeliverable copies, orders for subscriptions and other mail items should be sent to the Editor, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts.**

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# "ESSENTIALLY CONGREGATIONALIST"

**Professor Marion J. Bradshaw, Ph.D.,**
**Bangor, Maine**

In his debate at the Maywood meeting of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, President Howard Schomer said, "The Constitution of the World Council of Churches itself is essentially Congregationalist, in its unlimited respect for the autonomy of the member churches." He might profitably have supported his bare assertion by quotations from that Constitution and from the accompanying Rules.

The very opening sentence of the Council Constitution states that the World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches. It flatly declares that "The World Council shall not legislate for the churches." To be eligible for Council membership, "A Church which is to be admitted must give evidence of autonomy." Another Rule provides that "A Church which desires to resign its membership in the Council can do so at any time." There can be no question but that the World Council of Churches believes firmly in autonomy.

Out of his long service as a secretary of the World Council, Dr. Schomer not only declares that the Council's Constitution is "essentially Congregationalist, in its unlimited respect for the autonomy of the member churches," but he adds that it is "likewise close to our Congregational position in its vision of Christ's whole people, freely united, committed to voluntary and costly service all over the world." Given this insight into the "essentially Congregationalist" nature of the World Council Constitution, can not all of us go along with this distinguished Congregationalist in his ardent advocacy of the ecumenical cause?

### What Kind of Autonomy?

The answer to this urgent question lies in the fact that some of Dr. Schomer's language really amounted, under the circumstances of his address, to misleading double-talk. In the ten-volume dictionary from which he gave his definition of "unit," Congregationalism is defined as "A system of ecclesiastical polity which regards all legislative, disciplinary and judicial functions as vested in the individual church or local congregation of believers." This is the autonomy which is "essentially Congregationalist." But this is not at all the autonomy for which the World Council Constitution has "unlimited respect." The fact is that Congregations, or local churches, are not members of the World Council. Its membership is reserved for general or national churches, or for whole denominations. As their Rules directly state, "Under the word churches are included such denominations as are composed of local autonomous churches." The Constitution contains not one word favoring the ecclesiastical polity which is based on the autonomy of local churches. Without this it is quite misleading to talk about the Constitution as being "essentially Congregationalist."

Dr. Schomer quoted a definition of "unit" from a 10-volume work which he called "The Dictionary of Historic Usage." (The last word may be *uses* instead of *usage,* — the tape is not clear on that word.) Not finding such a dictionary in the University of Maine Library, or in our Seminary, or in the great Bangor Public Library, I thought it likely that the speaker merely meant to describe the work, not to give its title. This idea was confirmed when I found that Winchell's Guide to Reference Books lists no such title. I therefore turned with some confidence to the "Oxford Dictionary," titled, "A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles," where under "unit" I found the definition President Schomer had given us. I also found material which made me wish that he had quoted a bit more from his 10-volume dictionary.

### Congregational or Presbyterian?

Dr. Schomer assured us that the framers of the United Church of Christ Constitution used the word "unit" in its only proper sense. He was somewhat emphatic in asserting that paragraph 7 of the Constitution is rightly and soundly Congregationalist in stating, "The basic unit of the life and organization of the United Church of Christ is the local church." The fact is that this sentence, slightly altered in being taken over from the Basis of Union, is substantially identical with what Dr. Schomer's big dictionary tells us about the Presbyterian system.

Among the many historical uses or definitions of the word *Congregational,* is this: "Congregational, of or belonging to the congregation as the lowest organized unit in the Presbyterian system."

The local church is the basic unit of organization in the United Church of Christ. It is the lowest organized unit in the Presbyterian system. That "basic unit of organization" and "lowest organized unit" are synonymous phrases hardly needs assertion. But it does need to be asserted that neither phrase is either accurate or helpful in describing what is "essentially Congregationalist."

### HISTORICAL MATERIAL WANTED AT LIBRARY

**The Committee appointed by the Congregational Christian Historical Society to collect materials which may be useful to the future historian in studying the discussions concerning the United Church of Christ, urges that all who have letters or personal documents concerning the issue, or who have personal recollections of important events in this connection, should notify this committee.**

**Such material should be sent to Dr. John A. Harrer, Congregational Library, 14 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts. The Committee desires to collect material on both sides of the issue, which can be kept for the use of students in days to come. Dr. Charles C. Merrill represents the pro-union group, Rev. Joseph J. Russell the National Association, with Dr. Vaughan Dabney, Secretary of the Historical Society, as chairman.**

# WOMEN'S WORK

MRS. ROBERT E. COLLINS, Chairman
1014 FLORAL DRIVE, S.E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

### Women as Builders

With the decision to make the extension of Congregational Christian Churches a part of "The Women's Project — Our Shared Benevolence" for 1961, the women of our member Churches have joined a worthy work force, that of builders in the Congregational Way. There are at least three ways to help:

1 Gifts earmarked to the Women's Project as they are sent to Dr. Davies, Treasurer, should — if the donor wishes — indicate the amount to go to Piedmont College and the amount to be applied toward Church Extension. This may be a gift included in your annual budget, the proceeds of a special undertaking, or the accumulated gifts at a special offering. Women's Project envelopes are available at the NACCC office for individual or group gifts. (Suggested Dedication Services are also available.)

2 In the pages of THE CONGREGATIONALIST announcement has been made of the "$10 Club," a roster of those individuals and organizations which undertake to send $10 when they are notified that "dirt has been turned" for the building of a new Congregational Church, with the understanding that they will not be asked to contribute more than three times a year. At the Women's Seminar at Maywood, enthusiasm was expressed for this as a project for circles and associations as well as individuals and Churches.

A pledge form appeared on Page 10 of the November CONGREGATIONALIST or may be secured from Dr. Howell D. Davies, Room 2308, 100 North La Salle Street, Chicago 2, Illinois.

3 Available at the NACCC office are copies of the splendid guidebook called "The Bible in Your Life," written by Dr. Harry Butman, and published by the Congregational Church of the Messiah, Los Angeles. All money received from the sale of these lectionaries is to be used for Church Extension. They are small enough to fit in your Bible, light enough for mailing, concise, dignified, and very helpful. Their format makes them suitable for sending to the sick or bereaved, to new members of your Church or women's society, or for use as a remembrance to friends at a special season or to the members of a Church membership class. The charge is 25¢ each, five for $1.00, 15¢ in quantities of 50 or more. The check you send to cover the cost will go for Church Extension, and if your women's association should order them in quantity and sell them singly, there would be an additional profit to accumulate for the fund.

### Help Needed

For twenty years the energy and interest of too much of our leadership has been centered on enticing our Congregational Churches into a new denomination, and the building of free Congregational Churches has been too long neglected. Vast new population centers have sprung up with no available alternative to an authoritarian Church.

Those who have treasured a heritage of freedom in their church life and wish to have succeeding generations able to enjoy the freedom and fellowship of the Congregational Way must lay their hands to the task. This is a challenge to our women, one which they may answer both as individuals and in their units and larger associations. It is part of the large construction job which faces us in this New Year.

### On to Alaska

Of course you know that one of our newest gathered Churches (not yet a-building) is in Anchorage. One of the members of the Commission on Women's Work, Mrs. Greenwood of Cheyenne, Wyoming, wrote to a new Anchorage member asking what her women could do in a direct way to be of help. Mrs. Hampton replied that they would welcome mittens for their missionary work, and need hymnbooks for their own services. (The Cheyenne Church is sending hymnals.) These helping hands across the miles show that "nothing can separate us". Mrs. Hampton added the reassuring word that they had already begun holding monthly pot-luck suppers!

### Commission Members

A new term for Commission members will begin January 1. Completing three-year terms are Mrs. Edward Adams, Marshalltown, Iowa; Mrs. George R. Berkaw, Detroit, Michigan; Mrs. Robert Collins, Grand Rapids, Michigan. A third of the Commission terms expire each year, though members may be reappointed.

In making appointments the Executive Committee endeavors to maintain a balance between large and small, country and city Churches, and to represent different geographical areas. New appointments to the Commission will be announced as soon as possible.

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## Chinese Dolls Available

Another shipment of Chinese dolls in authentic native costume, and of bags and pin cushions, has arrived from our mission work in Hong Kong. Churches, Sunday Schools and societies which desire these for selling to help the Hong Kong missionary and refugee work should write to Rev. Edward H. Smith, 138 Hancock Street, Auburndale 66, Massachusetts, or Dr. Howell D. Davies, Room 2308, 100 North La Salle Street, Chicago 2, Illinois.

# Congregational Bookshelf

**Rev. Royal G. Davis, Los Angeles, California**

## "WORLD CONGREGATIONALISM"

A little magazine, now six issues old, presents the news and history of world Congregationalism as it is practiced as far apart as England and South Africa, Hawaii and Wales, Sweden and Australia. Churches loosely considered Congregational include the Welsh Independents and German Church of the Palatinate, the Remonstrant Brotherhood of Holland and the Covenant Churches of Scandinavia. Despite the pro-merger bias of the magazine, it does contain much valuable information for the critical reader.

Did you know that the Congregationalists represent the largest Protestant group in the Islands and that the first U. S. Senator from that state is a member of a Chinese Congregational Church in Honolulu? Senator Hiram Fong takes his first name from one of the early Congregational missionaries to his homeland. Australian Congregationalists have recently dedicated a church in the national capital after they discovered they could not work with Methodists and Presbyterians. The Palatinate Church of West Germany where the word "Protestant" was first used has agreed to accept "unrestricted communion of Pulpit and Lord's Table" with Congregationalists. We have always extended such a covenant relationship with all Christians, but it is good to hear that others are gradually moving in our direction.

The oldest Congregational Church in England, gathered in 1566 by stonemasons working for the Marquis of Bath at Horningsham, Wiltshire, began Presbyterian but later joined the Congregational fellowship. A new history of Congregationalism in Scotland has been published. The Remonstrant Brotherhood is celebrating the work of its founder, the famous theologian Jacob Arminius, born in 1560. Congregationalism has 110 German-speaking churches in Brazil with 18,000 members. A Colored Congregational Church in South Africa has 7,450 communicants.

In Western Samoa the first Prime Minister, Fiame Mata'afa, is a Congregationalist whose forebears have long supported the work of the London Missionary Society. Great Britain reports a decline in Congregationalists from 460,000 to 212,000. How much of this is due to the ecumenical blurring of important distinctions and the decline of the famous Liberal Party in national life? North Street Congregational Church in Jamaica is the first to be almost wholly independent of missionary subsidies, in the Caribbean area.

Continuing Congregationalism around the world, from South India to Wichita, Kansas reasserts two basic principles — the priesthood of all believers and the complete autonomy of the local church under Christ. WORLD CONGREGATIONALISM can be ordered for one dollar per year from the National Fellowship of Congregational Christian Women, 19 South La Salle Street, Chicago 3, Illinois. Read with care it can be of considerable merit.

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# FAMOUS CONGREGATIONALISTS

**Arvel M. Steece, Ph.D., Old Saybrook, Connecticut**

## 1652 JOHN WISE 1725

John Wise was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts, in 1652 and died in Ipswich, Massachusetts in 1725. Samuel Danforth and John Eliot, pastor and teacher respectively of the Roxbury Church, were influences in his youth. Wise was graduated from Harvard (B.A., 1673; M.A., 1676). From 1673 through 1677 he was minister at Branford, Connecticut. Late in 1677 he began a ministry in Hatfield, Massachusetts, and served there until May, 1680, when he went to the Chebacco parish of Ipswich. In 1683 the Church was organized formally and Wise was installed in the pastorate that was to be his life time ministry.

Wise's chief claim to fame rests upon his works *The Churches Quarrel Espoused* (written 1710, published 1713), and *A Vindication of the Government of New England Churches* (1717). In 1705 the Boston Proposals and in 1708 the Saybrook Platform expressed presbyterianizing tendencies. Wise wrote to refute them, to remind the people and the Churches of their heritage of liberty, and to defend the Cambridge Platform. In the first of his works he uses satire most effectively. In the second work he depends on "sober argument and reasoned judgment".

Wise served as a chaplain with the Connecticut forces in King Phillip's War (1676) and in 1690 he was one of the chaplains accompanying the ill-fated expedition against Quebec. In 1687 he was one of the leaders in Ipswich's contest with Governor Andros regarding "taxation without representation". Wise was jailed and later sued Dudley for denying him the privilege of *habeas corpus*. After the fall of the Andros government, Wise served in the Ipswich delegation to the General Court when the court took action against Andros and his officers.

In the smallpox epidemic Wise championed inoculation. There is no record that Wise attended the trials during the witchcraft hysteria. However, two of his former parishioners were among the accused. Wise is thought to have been the author of a petition on their behalf which he signed with a number of people from his congregation. The document shows an enlightenment uncommon at that time. Wise was also concerned that the colony develop a sound monetary policy. His life witnesses to the varied and useful careers of the New England divines who were the "Lamps of the Churches."

There is no portrait. There is a modern biography. Cook, George Allan. **John Wise, Early American Democrat.** New York, 1952.

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
# PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

**Miss Marilyn Heaney, *Secretary***
**Box 1003, Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont**

## SUMMER PILGRIMAGES — 1961

Good news for Pilgrim Fellowship members! Although applications for enrolment in the 1961 Summer Pilgrimages have been coming in quite rapidly, the final date for them has been extended to January 25th, 1961. A deposit of $50.00 with each application must be in by that time. All interested young people should write at once to Dr. Henry David Gray, South Congregational Church, Main and Buckingham Streets, Hartford 3, Connecticut.

*Queen's College, Cambridge*

### To the Land of the Pilgrims

The Pilgrimage to the country of the Pilgrim Fathers will have its headquarters at the Church dedicated to their memory in Southwark, London. The present pastor of that Church, Miss Catherine Mitchell, who trained at St. Paul's House, Liverpool, and Dr. Albert D. Belden, minister-emeritus, well known here for his 1960 visits, will have charge of the group while in London. The American youth will help to put the premises in order, do some painting, and meet young people from other Churches. Sightseeing

*Continued on page 7*

*Acrocorinth towers above Corinth of St. Paul's day and is full of history.*

*Mars Hill, Athens*

## SUMMER PILGRIMAGES

*Continued from page 6*

to places of interest in connection with the Pilgrim Fathers and a journey throughout England under the guidance of Dr. Belden will be worth the whole trip. Rev. Robert H. Scanland of Pomona, California, will be in charge of the party.

### In the Footsteps of St. Paul

The Greek unit will go to Alexandroupolis under the direction of Rev. and Mrs. Philotheos Zikas. There they will help with painting and building on a new house of worship. Pastor Zikas will then conduct them on a journey "Walking in the Footsteps of St. Paul." The "Flying Pilgrims" who did this last summer found it a most remarkable experience.

Once again, Pilgrim Fellowshippers, here is the opportunity of a lifetime for sightseeing, making new friends, and deepening your Christian life through work and worship. Be sure to write to Dr. Gray at once for detailed information, and have your application, accompanied by deposit, in well before the final date.

### Piedmont College Slides Ready

A set of slides, together with a taped commentary depicting our 1960 Piedmont College Work Camp is now available. Please write the National Association office at 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

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## FREEDOM OR EFFICIENCY?

**Rev. Alvin C. Bacon, Boynton Beach, Florida**

One of our Conference Superintendents commended the merger because, he said, it would promote greater efficiency in our missionary enterprises. We could afford to sacrifice some measure of freedom to gain a greater measure of efficiency. This stirred with me an old memory. Here it was again, that old controversy between freedom and efficiency. But had not that issue been fought out to a conclusion in two world wars? The German nation, first under the Kaiser, then under Hitler, had made a fetish of *Efficiency*. To be supremely efficient in every phase of their common life — that had been their aim and goal. To that end they were ready to sacrifice liberty, decency and all human values. The essence of that *Kultur*, of which we heard so much, was best expressed in the term *Efficiency*.

I well recall how American tourists, travelling in Germany and Britain, came back home contrasting the order of Germany with the confusion of Britain. In Germany they found prosperous cities, clean streets, thriving commerce, a disciplined people bending their energies to a common purpose, but still a docile people consenting to the many restraints which were laid upon them. In Britain, on the other hand, there were sprawling slums, contending classes, muddling policies. But the Britons, with all their weaknesses, were a free people passionately devoted to their traditional liberties. And when the crucial test of war came it was the free people, sustained by their inner spiritual strength, who survived. It was the efficient people who had surrendered their liberties who faltered and fell. Woodrow Wilson once said, "The highest form of efficiency is the spontaneous cooperation of a free people." Said of a political situation it is equally true of the religious issue which now confronts us. As Congregationalists we have given willing cooperation to the work of the Kingdom. Do our leaders think we will do more or better work under compulsion? We believe our service has been better, far better, because it has been voluntary. Any form of coercion defeats itself in the end. There is no substitute for freedom. KEEP OUR CHURCHES FREE!

## SOME NOTABLE QUOTES

President James Madison was convinced that freedom under the law must include liberty in religion as well as government.

Madison said, "man is accountable to his God alone," and not to any priest or hierachy. Complete religious liberty for every individual and every sect, Madison argued, would not only free the human mind from that "religious bondage (that) shackles and debilitates it, and unfits it for every noble enterprise," but would also lead to harmony in society. Instead of any one church, Madison therefore favored a multiplicity of sects, because the existence of a large number of religions would, among other things, prevent any one from dominating the others.

> **"The Complete Madison,"** by Saul K. Padover, (Copyright Harper and Brothers. Quoted by permission.)

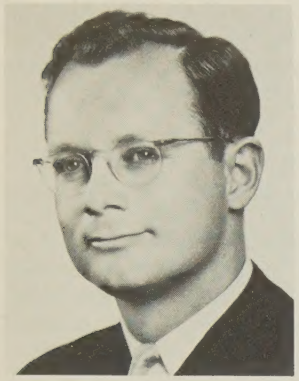
From the Autobiography of Flavel Bascom, 1833-40.

Brother Foster, their former minister (at Plainfield, Illinois) . . . favored the Unionism advocated by one Merrick and his followers in Western New York whose influence was really adapted to create a new sect, whose distinguishing article of faith was, that no sect had any right to exist but that all Christians should disband their organizations and be merged in organic unity — in other words all join the new sect called Unionists. While there was much abstract truth in their creed on this subject, the influence of their preaching and methods was distracting and enfeebling to the churches. There was therefore much good sense in the remark of an old Deacon, who had sympathized with the doctrine and had favored the aims of the Unionists, but when he saw the practical working of their plans, he drew back saying, "he did not believe in being united all to pieces."

> Sweet, **Religion on the American Frontier, III, The Congregationalists**, p. 280. (Copyright 1939, University of Chicago Press. Quoted by permission.)

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

**Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., Milwaukee, Wisconsin**



As I consider what I would like to communicate through this column during the first month of a new year, my thoughts seem to turn to the important decisions still to be made by the large majority of Congregational Churches concerning the question of participation in the "United Church of Christ." It is probable that many Churches will be discussing this matter at the time of their annual meetings. In some instances actual decisions will be made in these meetings. In other instances plans will be made for discussion and study preceding a vote at a later date.

I am thankful that we had the foresight to develop a Special Educational Effort in regard to the constitution of the "United Church of Christ." As you know, we refer to this effort as our S.E.E. program. Through the special funds which have been raised for this purpose, we have been able to provide literature and speakers for Churches in every part of the country. We have been receiving numerous requests. We have been able to respond to all of them.

The fundamental purpose of our S.E.E. program is to encourage pro-and-con discussion of the issues relating to the United Church before voting takes place. If you want to help in assuring such study in every Congregational Church, you could contact friends in neighboring Churches to find out what plans they have for discussion in their Church. You could point out that materials and speakers are available.

In addition to making these comments about our S.E.E. program, I find that I would like to share two other matters with you.

It has become clear to me that there is a need to develop a national fellowship for Congregational people. There will be numerous Congregationalists who will want to maintain their contact with the Congregational Way, even though their Church may vote to join the "United Church of Christ." There would be many values achieved through a national fellowship for Congregational people. Among other things, such a national fellowship might help to develop Congregational clubs in regional and local areas. You will probably be hearing more about this in the near future.

It also becomes increasingly clear to me that we need to encourage broad discussion concerning the direction the ecumenical movement is taking. This is a concern which involves all denominations. I believe that Christian unity is best expressed in terms of fellowship and cooperation, rather than in terms of organic structural unity. I know that many people from every denomination share this conviction. We ought to do something to stimulate discussion of this issue on a broad interdenominational basis. If you share this concern, I would appreciate hearing from you.

# THE PEOPLE ASK

At a recent debate in Los Angeles on the Constitution of the proposed United Church of Christ, individual Congregationalists from twenty-seven Churches raised serious questions. Some of them are listed below for your information and consideration. The people are asking questions and they deserve honest answers. Questions alone are recorded; comments and opinions are excluded for obvious reasons.

What was the source of authority of the General Council to join us to any other body?

In what way is the United Church an accomplished fact?

By what right did the General Synod appropriate national Congregational organizations?

Does it seem to you that the opposition is an appeal to our fears like the arguments of those who opposed ratification of the U. S. Constitution? I'm glad men of faith won out in those days.

If there is to be no change in polity, why was a Constitution considered necessary?

What is the estimated cost of maintaining the General Synod and necessary staffs, and will this be an additional cost to the Churches which are members?

Do we have a right to vote into the UCC only because the courts ordered it? Did not the General Council intend to take our Churches in without our vote?

Do newly formed Churches have to vote on the merger?

If the local Churches are going to remain exactly the same in regard to their rights, what are the advantages of the merger?

Do you consider the Encyclopedia Britannica in error when it states the church polity of the United Church is not congregational? It does so state in the 1960 edition.

If the Constitution guarantees freedom why did Dr. Horton say that inclusion of a statement of rights of Churches and ministers was *dangerous?*

Wherein the By-Laws of the United Church spell out the intentions of the Constitution, why is it that the local Churches will not have an opportunity to vote on them now or in the future?

Suppose 10 years hence, the executive committee proposes an amendment to the Constitution amending it to state that a local Church cannot withdraw from the UCC and ministers will not be called by the local Church but placed by the state conference, would the local Church have a vote in this matter?

What rights will a minority group have in regard to church property if the majority vote to go into the UCC?

Would a congregation with theological views different from the majority be welcome in the UCC and be allowed to control its benevolence giving?

Can you say the state conference papers as a whole have not been propaganda for the merger?

# "MORAL EXPECTATIONS"

**Rev. Ward K. Klopp, Merrill, Michigan**

Toward the close of the Grand Rapids General Council a young man arose and asked the question: "If a Church wished to come into the new denomination, but was unable to accept its statement of faith, would it be received?" After a prolonged huddle by those on the platform the reply was given: "Yes, it would be received; but it would be morally expected to accept the statement of faith."

In the Preamble to the Basis of Union we read: "Believing that denominations exist, not for themselves, but as parts of the Church within which each denomination is to live and labor and, if need be, die . . ." Why that word "die"? Why was it placed at the end of a sentence? Grammarians know that the end of a sentence is a place of greatest emphasis. Why the emphasis upon the word "die"? Was it because they were aware of the fact the merger meant the death of Congregationalism? When we recall how Dr. James Wagner has emphasized that "The new denomination will not be Congregationalism," and that the Basis of Union was written only after many months of deliberation, there is not the slightest doubt that to them the merger meant the death of Congregationalism. Those Congregational executives who sat in on those deliberations were morally expected to promote Congregationalism and not to plot its death.

### Union By Strangulation

How is the union to be effected? A leading executive of the General Council plotted the strategy when he said: "Get them together! Get them together! even though it takes a hundred years to work out the details." In Conferences and Associations we see how the getting together strategy has been carried on. Pilgrim Fellowships, Women's Fellowships, Laymen's Fellowships are all working together with related groups in the E and R denomination. Recently, when the question was asked in one of the groups what the relationship between the Congregationalists and E and R denomination was, a State official replied: "We are just walking along together." In other words, the most precious reality in the Christian experience, the love of Christians for Christians — "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" — that tie is being used to strangle Congregationalism to a slow, but sure death. By their Constitutions the Conferences and Associations are morally expected to promote Congregationalism and not an alien denomination.

### Should This Be Expected?

It is morally expected that Congregational funds be used for Congregational purposes. But consider the action taken by the Executive Committee of the General Council at its meeting at Buck Hill Falls on January 30-31, 1958: "The Conferences and the Conventions shall be requested to advise the Churches in connection with the 1958 solicitation of the per capita or fellowship dues in the Church of the desire and intention of the General Council to use a portion of such funds and the funds of the ensuing years to meet its share of the expense of the activities of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ."

We are now confronted with the newly revised Constitution. A superficial view of this document can readily cause the unwary to think that all Congregational rights and principles are adequately safeguarded. Paragraph 21 can readily be considered a gilt-edged guarantee to that effect until a reading of the By-Laws reveals how those rights have been abridged and nullified. When, however, we remember the distinction between inherent rights and delegated rights, that no power on earth can take away inherent rights while delegated rights can be taken away by the power that delegated them, we see the fallacy and the danger of paragraph 21. Palmer D. Edmunds, Esq. has described this fact most effectively in his article in the June 1960 issue of THE CONGREGATIONALIST. The fact of how the proposed Constitution barters away the inherent rights of Congregational Churches needs to be hammered hard into the mind and conscience of every Congregationalist. To thus barter away our inherent rights for delegated rights is like trading gilt-edged government bonds for speculative oil stocks. Congregationalists are morally expected to protect the inherent rights of every Congregational Church. Thus as Congregationalists every executive of the General Council, every Congregational minister, every Congregational Church and member is morally expected to protect the inherent rights of our Congregational Churches. You have little reason to expect high moral standards in society if the Church is accustomed to renege on its own moral expectations.

### OTHER BOOKS WORTH READING

In addition to the review in our "Congregational Bookshelf" column, two books of interest to Congregational Christians may be mentioned briefly. One of them concerns the Christian Church, whose General Convention joined the National Council of Congregational Churches in 1931, while the other tells of some of the great missionaries who went out through the years under the American Board to bring the gospel to all the world.

**The Origin, History, Principles and Contributions of the Christian Church** by A. E. Cortner, D.D., 22 pages, published 1960, may be obtained on request, free, from its author at 617 South 29th Street, Lafayette, Indiana. **They Lived Their Faith** by Fred Field Goodsell, D.D., will be published in the early Spring. 500 pages; Hardcover edition $5.50, Paperback $2.50. Order from the American Board of Commissioners For Foreign Missions, Room 102, 14 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts.

# CAN YOU REALLY WITHDRAW?

**A Guest Editorial by**

**Harold C. Bailey, West Hartford, Connecticut**

Section 21 of the United Church of Christ Constitution reads in part, "Nothing . . . shall destroy or limit the right of each local church . . . to withdraw by its own decision from the United Church of Christ at any time without forfeiture of ownership or control of any real or personal property owned by it."

Do these words actually mean what they seem to mean, namely that a majority vote to withdraw will be sufficient to release a local Church from the United Church of Christ? The experience of St. Martin's in Annapolis, Maryland, in this year of Grace, 1960, is a stern warning to all that this point must be clarified before any of our Churches vote to unite.

Does every one of your members know and understand the story of St. Martin's as every Congregational minister already should know it? (September, 1960 Bulletin p. 4 sent to every listed Congregational minister in the USA by the Continuation Committee, Room 2308, 100 North La Salle Street, Chicago 2, Illinois.) Has your minister told your Church about this case? Or are you being asked to vote in ignorance of a vital point of information?

### *St. Martin's Can't Get Out*

Here is the story of St. Martin's attempt to get out. St. Martin's Evangelical Lutheran Church is a local church of The Evangelical and Reformed Church. Its own Constitution says that it can change affiliation by a ⅔ vote of its members. After careful study and after hearing people sent in by the United Church of Christ it voted 238 to 34 (87% to 13%) to join the United Lutherans instead.

Thereupon with the approval of President James E. Wagner the name of its minister was erased from the roll, the pulpit officially declared vacant, and the 34 members who voted to stay in the E & R Church were alone recognized as the true church of St. Martin's. These 34 people have the legal support of the E & R (national) Church in their action at law to retain the church property as against the 238 members who voted to withdraw.

### *Are the E & R Officials Morally Justified?*

It may be that the E & R (national) Constitution gives the top ecclesiastics the legal right to hang on to local churches whatever the will of the local members. But in 1960 St. Martin's was also a congregation of the United Church of Christ. (See Section 12*a* of the UCC Constitution.) Whatever the legal technicalities it would seem that the E & R officials are now at least morally bound to operate under the UCC provisions when favorable to a local church.

Are these officials then paying no attention to Section 21 and its proclaimed right of withdrawal? Possibly so, but there may be another explanation.

Perhaps Section 21 is being construed officially to mean that any local Church can withdraw upon a *unanimous* vote of its members, but not otherwise. Under this theory so long as one or two members of a local Church want to stay in the United Church of Christ, they alone will be regarded as the "true" Church and their right to stay in the UCC ONLY will be ecclesiastically upheld whatever the majority may want to do. (In most states the civil law also will uphold the faithful minority in continuing with the old faith and practice whatever it may be.)

This is so important a point that no Congregational Church can prudently vote itself into the union until Section 21 is revised to make clear whether withdrawal can be effected by a mere majority vote or only by a unanimous vote.

Any requirement of a unanimous vote for withdrawal amounts in practical effect to an irrevocable commitment of the local Church and its property to the United Church of Christ.

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# *NEWS NOTES*

**Centennial at Winthrop, Maine.** The 100th anniversary of the present house of worship of the Congregational Church of Winthrop, Maine, was observed on October 15 and 16, 1960. The Church was gathered on September 4, 1776. Rev. Earle A. Clifford is the present pastor.

**Pastoral Changes.** Rev. Harlo H. Ferris has begun work as pastor of the Northland Congregational Church, Rockford, Michigan . . . The First Church in Houlton, Maine, has extended a call to Mr. Robert O. Blake of Greenville, who begins his work in January.

**Midwest Church Seeks Educator.** A National Association member-Church in a midwestern community is seeking a Director of Religious Education. The Church has 750 members, with 300 in Church School and Youth Divisions. Musical ability is preferred but not required. Correspondence regarding this may be channeled through the office of THE CONGREGATIONALIST.

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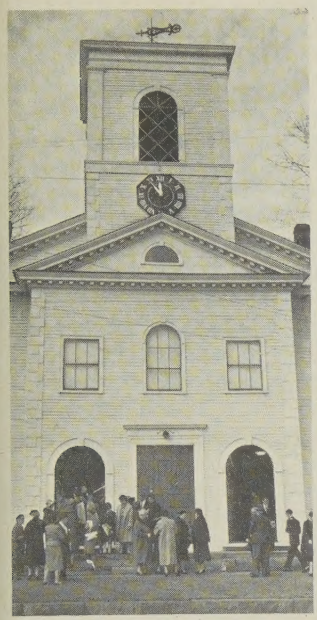
## In Memoriam

Rev. Edmund E. Gunther, former pastor of Mayfair Church, Toledo, Ohio, and of the Congregational Churches in Somerset, Dundee and Gibraltar, Michigan, died in Toledo on October 31, 1960, at the age of 76. In addition to his work as a minister, Mr. Gunther was remarkably skilled in horticulture. He operated a botanical garden in Saline, Michigan, and planned botanical projects for many exhibitions.

# Connecticut Church 300 Years Old

The First Congregational Church of Norwich, Connecticut, on the green in the Norwichtown section of the city, observed the 300th anniversary of its founding, at three services on Sunday, November 27, 1960. Dr. A. Lynn Booth, pastor since last February, preached at the morning service, on the theme "Watchers of a Beacon." At 3:30 Dr. Rockwell Harmon Potter, Honorary Minister of the First (Center) Church in Hartford and Dean Emeritus of Hartford Theological Seminary, delivered the sermon on "The Mission of the Meetinghouse," and at 7:00 an historical review was given by Rev. Melville T. Kennedy, D.D., Minister Emeritus of the Church, and greetings were brought by Mr. Harold C. Bailey of West Hartford, son of Rev. Gurdon Bailey, a former pastor, and by Rev. Wilfred J. Maclean of Park Church, Norwich, on behalf of the daughter Churches. Other ministers participating in the services were Rev. William J. Llewellyn-Phillips and Rev. Myron R. Bunnell. Rev. Malcolm S. Crook brought greetings from New London Association, and Rev. David W. Brown from the Norwich Council of Churches.



The present building, erected in 1801, is the fifth meeting house of First Church. The original building was abandoned because of danger from the Indians in King Philip's War, and the second one was used as an arsenal, an observation post, and a refuge as well as a house of worship.

All Congregationalists trust that the future may have in store many years of usefulness to God and man for this fine old New England meetinghouse, its people and its pastor. Of special interest to those who are concerned with the work of the Hong Kong and Formosa missions, sponsored by the Missionary Society of the Congregational Christian Churches, is the fact that it was from this Church that Rev. Edward H. Smith went forth as a missionary to China, from whose long service in that country sprang the will of Chinese Christians to serve the refugees from Communism who have fled to the islands where this work is now going on.

### TEN ISSUES THIS YEAR

By vote of the National Association Executive Committee on October 5, 1960, the publishing of THE CONGREGATIONALIST will be for ten months only, (omitting July and August) this year. The same subscription rates, $2.00 per annum, with club rate of $1.00 each if ten or more names are sent in together, will continue. All who subscribe will receive the periodical direct by mail. It is urgently requested that all names sent in be written clearly and correct addresses given.

# OUR DEVOTIONAL COLUMN

## Rev. Carl M. Gates, Claremont, California

THEME FOR THE MONTH: *The Adventure of Life*
*Suggested Readings: Ephesians 3: 14-21 and Philippians 3: 12-14*

A good motto for the New Year is the message of Joaquin Miller's poem "Columbus":

"Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good word:
What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leapt as a leaping sword:
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

That is the meaning of life — not a task to be done; not a goal to be won, but a journey out of weakness into ever-increasing strength; out of ignorance into the "ecstasy of widening thought", out of suspicion and hate and jealousy into ever-enlarging areas of good will.

The past has left us beautiful memories to cheer us on. Love has believed in us and by that miracle of confidence has enabled us, now and then, to do what we thought impossible. Misfortunes have somehow turned into blessings. Defeat has taught us lessons that opened the way to victory later on.

But "what is past is prologue," or ought to be. The best use of the past, someone has said, is to get a better future out of it. For the Christian the best is always ahead. Man's blunders and sins may hinder the fulfilment of God's loving purpose, but the heart of our faith is the conviction that in some way, which we cannot fully understand, God's will shall ultimately triumph.

Thank God, then, for the great adventure of life — full of danger, but full also of untold possibilities, so that, for those who walk with God, "each day opens new a continent of vivid experience; each day shows a new world to conquer." No monotony, no drabness, even in the midst of routine, for with eyes that God has opened we can "see the shining form of the unusual through the dull garments of the normal," to use David Grayson's phrase. Every person we meet may reveal some unguessed greatness, until at last it dawns on us that out of commonplace lives God makes his beautiful whole.

And when black clouds hide the sun, and the road dips into dark valleys, and we cry out for fear, we shall hear His voice saying unto us, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee," and we shall realize, as Emerson did, that "when it is dark enough, we see the stars." We learn what God can be and do for us only when our own resources have proved utterly inadequate. Man's necessity is God's opportunity. The great artists learn in suffering what they express in heavenly harmonies. *Prayer:* Make us ready for the great adventure of living. We do not pray for immunity from risks; we pray for courage to face risks. . . . We pray that the adventure of living may be guarded and sustained by an undefeated patience, willing to wait for new light, and to reenforce duty by loyalty. We do not know what a day shall bring forth. Arm us for the campaign of life with an unperturbed faith and an unconquered hope. Amen.

FRANCIS G. PEABODY

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## IOWA FELLOWSHIP MEETING

Burlington is located in the southeast corner of Iowa on the Mississippi River. Although it is picturesque, it is not by any means centrally located for such a gathering. However, in spite of the long distances that some of our people had to travel and also the inclement weather, there was an excellent gathering of people from our Congregational Churches in Iowa.

I am happy to report that we had 74 registered representing 10 Churches in Iowa and 2 Churches from our neighboring State of Illinois.

The day opened with registration at 9 a.m. followed by a half-hour of fellowship and coffee. The Moderator, Rev. Paul G. Pitman, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., which was opened with devotions led by Rev. Norman Halliday, recently arrived in Iowa from Ireland, now serving at Riceville. At the conclusion of the devotions the business of the Iowa Fellowship got under way. There was a report on the various churches in Iowa which had voted to merge with the United Church of Christ. It was mutually agreed that wherein possible we should urge all Congregational Churches not to rush the vote, that an honest study be made first.

### The Spiritual Aspects

The most outstanding aspect of this Iowa Fellowship was the note of spirituality throughout the whole session from the opening devotions led by Rev. Mr. Halliday. His devotions elevated the whole session away from the mundane problems which have faced continuing Congregationalists through these many years of trials. With this recognition of the presence of God, there was a strength in binding this fellowship together in a renewed sense of conviction to the central purpose of our Christian ideals.

The young people who came from Spencer, Marshalltown, Cedar Rapids and Burlington also set a note of hope for the continuing Churches. During the luncheon hour there was a report made by Mary Holsteen and Bill Rehmann of the Burlington Church of their wonderful Christian experiences at Piedmont College last summer. Some of the other youngsters from Iowa who were also at Piedmont were introduced to the assembled body.

One of our outstanding guests was Tom Williams from Knox College of Galesburg, Illinois, who graciously gave of his time in leading the Fellowship in those dynamic Welsh hymns of his. The main address was given by Dr. Marion J. Bradshaw of Bangor, Maine, who spoke on "Speaking the Truth in Love." The Iowa Fellowship will long be indebted to Dr. Bradshaw for his indomitable spirit which prevailed through the whole session.

The conclusion of the meeting in the afternoon brought about various capsule reports of the work shops and the reporting on the happenings of the Maywood meeting of the National Association by Rev. Mary White and Mr. Bob Sterenborg. The meeting came to its conclusion at 3 p.m. with the recognition on the part of the participants that there is a greater unity still available to all Congregationalists in a free fellowship.

(Reported by Rev. Paul G. Pitman, Burlington)

## MORE CHURCHES VOTE NO

The Vernon Congregational Church, Vernon, Michigan, and Grace Congregational Church, Cleveland, Ohio, have voted not to become members of the United Church of Christ. In the New England states, the Florence Congregational Church, Northampton, Massachusetts, Central Congregational Church, Middleboro, Massachusetts, and Wolfeboro Congregational Church, Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, have likewise rejected the Constitution of the new denomination. In each of these Churches, a number of study meetings had been held with speakers for and against the union, and in each Church the vote was very decisive against entering.

The United Congregational Church of Bridgeport, Connecticut, voted on January 18, 1956, to require a 75% affirmative vote of those present and voting at a duly called meeting, to have the Church enter the United Church of Christ. A duly called meeting was held on November 16, 1960, at which a committee of 14, set up by the Church at its annual meeting in January 1957, presented a majority report, (9 members signing) against entering the new denomination, and a minority report, (5 members signing) in favor. All aspects of the issue had been discussed at previous meetings. At the November 16 meeting the vote was 281 YES to 140 NO, thus falling short of the required 75% for becoming part of the United Church of Christ.

## FROM THE LETTER BOX

*Editor,* THE CONGREGATIONALIST:

Congregational Christian Churches have always been a cooperative group of independent bodies, each the sole master of its own affairs and each with an absolute VETO of any direction or interference from other earthly groups. That is Congregationalism in its basic and historic essence, and *any* effort to infringe upon that VETO power is a violation of the character of Congregationalism, and is UN-Congregational, and ANTI-Congregational!

Therefore, *any* super-constitution, regardless of its sly wording, is a violation of that VETO power, as is also a governing Synod, by whatever name or pretense.

The "United" Church is bent on authority over the Churches which join. Even when a Church has voted to have nothing to do with the Merger, the Mergerites persist in presenting new approaches and asking for a re-vote.

The way for a Congregational Church to maintain its Congregationalism is to *act like* a Congregational Church and ignore every effort to inveigle it into some color of participation in this new hierarchy. At one time, they PRESUMED to sweep in everybody that didn't object, but that had to be given up as preposterous.

To those who cherish the independence of their Church, all requests for a vote on new propaganda should be ignored, whether from this new "United" authoritative denomination or from any other non-autonomous body. Every such effort asks for a violation of the VETO-POWER of Congregationalism! Make no mistake about that!!!

*Nantucket, Massachusetts* HOWARD C. BARBER